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The EXCELLENCY of our CONSTITUTION in
CHURCH and STATE:

A
S E R M O N

P R E A C H ' D

Before the WORSHIPFUL

T H E

Mayor and Corporation

O F T H E

CITY of BATH,

A T T H E

ABB E Y - C H U R C H,

O N

FRIDAY, October 18, 1754,

Being the Day on which

JOHN CHAPMAN, Esq;

Was Sworn the SECOND TIME

MAYOR of that CITY.

Publis'd at the Request of the MAYOR and Others.

B Y

DUEL TAYLOR, M.A.

RECTOR of BATH

B A T H :

Printed by THOMAS BODDELY.

THE EXCELLENCY OF THE CONSTITUTION IN
CHURCH AND STATE

SEYMOUR

PREACHED

Before the Worshipful

THE

Mayor and Corporation

OF THE

CITY OF BATH

AT THE

ABBEY-CHURCH

ON

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1754

Being the Day on which

JOHN WILKINS, Esq.

Was in Time



MAYOR OF THE CITY

WILKINS, Esq.

Published at the Request of the Mayor and Council

WILKINS, Esq.

BY

DUE TAYLOR, M.A.

RECTOR OF BATH

Printed by Thomas Borden

Printed by Thomas Borden

To the WORSHIPFUL
JOHN CHAPMAN, *Esq;*
M A Y O R
OF THE
CITY of BATH,
THIS
DISCOURSE

(Publish'd at His Request)

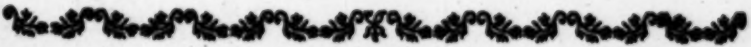
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With all HUMILITY,
INSCRIB'D,

By His most Obliged,

And Humble Servant,

Duel Taylor.





To the WORSHIPFUL

JOHN CHAPMAN, Esq;

MAYOR

OF THE

CITY OF BATH,

THIS

DISCOURSE

(Published at His Request)

18

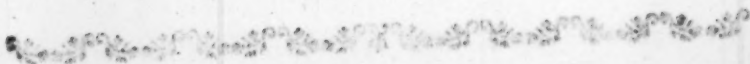
With all HUMILITY,

INSCRIBED,

By His most Obedient

And Humble Servant,

Daniel Taylor.





DEUT. iv. 8.

*And what Nation is there so great, that
hath Statutes and Judgments so right-
teous?*

MOSE S, in this Book, wherein he
enters upon a fresh Detail, and
gives a more circumstantial Ac-
count of that Series of Miracles, which
attended the Children of *Israel* in their
Journeyings thro' the Wilderness, from
Ægypt to the Land of *Canaan*, frequently
interrupts the Thread of his Narration,
in order to reason with them concerning
the righteous Acts of the LORD: He
continually reminds them of what great
Things he had done for them, and strongly

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urges them as so many Motives to Gratitude and Obedience.

THE first Instance which he gives, was no less great and stupendous in itself, than wonderful in the Means by which it was effected ; and was such a singular Act of God's Power, as he had never before, nor has ever since, exerted in Favour of any People : *Hath GOD assayed to go, and take him a Nation from the Midst of another Nation, by Temptations, by Signs, and by Wonders, and by War, and by a mighty Hand, and by a stretched-out Arm, and by great Terrors, according to all that the LORD your GOD did for you in Ægypt before your Eyes ?*

AND this Divine Power, which had so miraculously displayed itself in their Deliverance from *Ægyptian* Slavery, accompanied them in every Stage of their Journey, and was a present Help to them in

(1) DEUT. iv. 34.

Trouble, to rescue them from all Distresses and Dangers, and to supply all their Wants and Necessities : * *For what Nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all Things that we call upon Him for ?*

AND, not content with supporting them in this Manner by his immediate Power, and Presence, He gave them a System of Laws to be the standing Rule of their Behaviour, which were not only most righteous in themselves, but the best-suited to the particular State and Circumstances of that People. He was the Author (if I may so term it) of their Statute and Ecclesiastical Law, and regulated both their Civil and Religious Conduct. The Form of Government which he established among them was a Theocracy, by which he became their Law-giver, and their King.

(2) DEUT. iv. 7.

AND these Laws, *Moses* tells them, Should be their *Wisdom and Understanding in the Sight of the Nations*, who should bear all these Statutes, and not knowing their Divine Original, but judging them to be mere Institutions of their own, should say, *Surely this great Nation is a wise and understanding People: For what Nation is there so great, that hath Statutes and Judgments so righteous?*

Now, though we cannot boast the Divine Institution of our Laws, nor say that the Form of our Government is from God, yet we may, with the strictest Truth and Propriety, affirm, *That there is no Nation so great that hath Statutes and Judgments so righteous.*

ONE Part, indeed, of our Constitution, as it is founded on the express Word of God, and modell'd upon that Plan which He has laid down in the Gospel, may be said to be of Divine Appointment; though
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its being incorporated with the State, and made a Part of our Establishment may be considered as merely human. The Profession of Christianity is common to us with many other Nations; but the Profession of it in its utmost Purity, and in all Things so conformable to the Rules of the Gospel, as in its Doctrine and Discipline, in its Form of Government, and Manner of Worship, is, perhaps, peculiar to us.

NOR have we much less to say even of our Civil Establishment, which the Providence of GOD hath wonderfully preserv'd in these Kingdoms; which, if compar'd with the Civil Institutions of other Nations, will be found to exceed them, not only in the fundamental Laws of its Constitution, but in those righteous Acts which have, from Time to Time, been enacted, for the Good of the People. For it proposes this as the sole End of all its Laws, and not only considers Government as or-
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dain'd for this Purpose, but even Kings themselves as Servants of the State.

HAPPY are the People that are in such a Case, who have not only the LORD for their GOD, and worship Him in the Beauty of Holiness ; but are govern'd by a Set of Laws, whose sole Object is their Welfare and Happiness.

I HOPE, therefore, that it will not be unfuitable to the Occasion we are upon to enlarge upon this Subject, and to point out the Happiness we enjoy under our present National Establishment ; and then,

SECONDLY, To shew those Dispositions, or Affections, which this Consideration ought to excite, both in Magistrates and People.

As to the First of these, there need but little Pains to explain so clear a Matter, and to convince Men of the Truth of
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what they daily feel and experience. For who is there so ignorant as not to know? So senseless as not to perceive? So ungrateful as not to acknowledge the Felicity he enjoys in the Protection of his Person, in the Security of his Property, in the Preservation of his Liberty, and Religion, under our present happy Establishment? Which is a just Temperament of Freedom and Power; an equal Ballance of the Prerogative of the Prince, and the Liberty of the Subject; wherein the Boundaries of both are settled, and each is preserv'd without encroaching on the Other.

BUT, in Order to state the Thing more clearly, I shall divide the Privileges we enjoy under our happy Constitution into Civil and Religious, *i. e.* into such as we enjoy as Citizens and Freemen, and such as we enjoy as Christians and Protestants.

As to the First of these, it is evident that we are in full Possession of all our Civil Rights,

Rights, which are secur'd to us by the Act of Settlement, and other just and righteous Laws, calculated for that End and Purpose, and contriv'd with a View to their Preservation. For these Laws are not the arbitrary Impositions of despotick Power, but the calm and sober Deliberations of a wise Legislature, compos'd of the one Part of Persons not only elected by the free Voice, but chosen out of the Body of the People, and deputed by them to be the Guardians of their Liberties, the Protectors of their Rights and Properties: Who have for that End a Freedom of debating upon all Points that are propos'd to them, and a Power of putting a Negative upon what shall appear to them injurious to the Rights of the People. And therefore whatsoever would become a Statute of these Kingdoms, must gain the concurrent Approbation of both Houses, before it can receive the Royal Assent, and pass into a Law. So that the Laws by which we are govern'd are, in some Sort,
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of our own making, as having receiv'd the Consent of the People of this Nation by their Representatives in Parliament.

THE Laws, thus fram'd and constituted, are put into the Hands of our Sovereign, who has the sole executive Power, and are to be made by him the Rules of his Government, as well as the Measure of his Subjects Obedience. But as it is impossible that he should attend the Execution of these Laws in his own Person, so it was necessary that this Care should be committed to Men of sufficient Abilities for the Discharge of so important a Trust, who being vested with certain Powers deriv'd from him, might distribute Justice throughout his Dominions. Hence arose the different Orders of Magistrates among us, as well they who are nearer his Majesty's Person, and preside in the higher Courts of Judicature, as these who are plac'd over single Towns or Districts; whose Office it is to preserve the Peace

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and good Order of the Kingdom, to punish or to commit Delinquents, to decide Matters of Controversy which shall arise among the People, or to refer them to the Decision of a higher Court.

AND the Distribution of this Power into so many Hands is for this manifest Reason, that distributive Justice, which is not only necessary to the Well-Being, but to the very Being of a State, might be the more readily dispens'd, that we might have immediate Recourse to the Civil Magistrate upon all Occasions, either to prevent or redress our Wrongs, either to inflict severer Penalties on greater Offences, or by gentler Correction to put a Stop to lesser Evils, before they increase unto more Ungodliness.

BUT our Security is, that this Power, so necessary to the Preservation of Society, is limited, that the Laws have prescrib'd its Bounds, which it shall not pass, and that

that the Magistrate cannot go beyond these to do less or more. And no Wonder, since the Supreme Magistrate Himself is bound by these very Laws, and thinks himself oblig'd, upon all Occasions, to conform himself to them; nor can a single Instance be produc'd throughout his whole Reign of his Departure from them, or of his having, in Violation of them, infring'd the Privileges, invaded the Rights, or encroach'd upon the Liberties of his People. So that from hence it is evident, that we are as free as the Nature of Government will admit of, that we are in present Possession of all our Civil Rights, and have all the Security of our future Enjoyment of them, that the best Laws, and the best Constitution, can possibly give us.

FROM the Consideration of our Civil, let us pass on to that of our Religious Rights, which are secur'd to us by the same Laws, whereby we enjoy our Civil. For the Religion which is profess'd by the

greatest Part of this Nation is incorporated with the State, and serves to make up our present happy Establishment in Church and State.

AND the Church, which is thus united to the State, has all the Marks of a true Church, and of its being a sound Part of that Catholick or Universal Church of CHRIST, which is dispers'd throughout the World. For it is not built upon the sandy Bottom of a pretended Infallibility, but upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, JESUS CHRIST Himself being the chief Corner-Stone; nor modell'd upon the Plan of human Traditions, but upon the unerring Rule of God's Word, and primitive Antiquity.

It is a Church, in which Nothing but that Faith which was once deliver'd to the Saints is contended for; nothing but pure and undefiled Religion is profess'd; nothing but the unadulterated Doctrines of Christianity

Christianity are taught and inculcated : Which does not take the Key of Knowledge from the People, by locking up the Scriptures in an unknown Tongue, but allows, and practises the Reading of Them both in Publick and in Private, in a Language that is best understood of the People ; in which same Language all her Offices are perform'd, and her Sacraments are duly administred.

IT is a Church whose Worship is purg'd from all Idolatry and Superstition, and freed from the Burthen of needless and insignificant Ceremonies ; whose Liturgy is an exact, and comprehensive Form of Prayer, expressive of all our Desires, and including all our Wants both Spiritual and Temporal ; in which our own, and the Necessities of all Mankind are summ'd up ; and every Thing is contain'd, which is either needful for us to ask of God, or requisite to thank Him for.

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It is a Church which has restor'd the ancient Discipline, as far as the corrupt State of Christianity will admit of, and retain'd the primitive Form of Government, which under CHRIST is committed to his Majesty, and that ancient and venerable Order of Bishops. Which has upon all Occasions prov'd the Bulwark of the Reformation, and the strongest Barrier against the Encroachments of the Church of *Rome*. Which has produc'd the ablest Champions for true Religion, as well among her Laity as Clergy, who have stood the firmest in the most trying Times, and prov'd the best Advocates for the Christian Cause against all its Opponents,

In a Word, it is a Church which has none of that bitter and persecuting Spirit, which would force the Consciences of Men, and compel them to come in by sanguinary Laws, but, on the Contrary, uses nothing but Arguments and Intreaties either to keep Men in, or to bring them
over

over to her Communion ; and where she cannot prevail by these Means, grants a Toleration to All, who are so unhappy as to dissent from her ; but to that Sect only, which would persecute and destroy the Rest, and whose Principles, as well as Practices, are directly subversive of our happy Establishment both in Church and State. And yet, to shew the Extensiveness of her Charity, she has long conniv'd at the Exercise of that Religion in Private, which for her own Security she cannot allow of in Publick.

SUCH is that Church which is united to the State, which forms a Part of our Constitution, and serves to compleat the Felicity of this Nation.

AND certainly happy are the People that are in such a Case ; yea, blessed are the People who have the LORD for their God. *What Nation is there so great, that bath Statutes and Judgments so righteous ?*

Who

'Who is like unto Thee, O People saved by the LORD ?

AND thus, having consider'd the Happiness which we of this Nation enjoy under our present Establishment, I proceed in the

SECOND Place very briefly to shew those Dispositions, or Affections, which this Consideration ought to excite both in Magistrates and People.

AND the First of these is Thankfulness to Almighty God, for the Preservation and Continuance of these Blessings to us ; for having frequently interpos'd in Times of the greatest Danger, and sav'd them from Destruction ; for having restor'd them when lost ; for transmitting them to us in their utmost Perfection, and affording us the most pleasing Prospect of perpetuating these Blessings to our latest

(3) DEUT. xxxiii. 29:

Posterity. For these Incidents, so extraordinary in their Nature, and so beneficial in their Effects, carry with them the most evident Marks of their Divine Author. To consider them, therefore, as mere Contingencies, or to impute them to any Thing, rather than to the Sovereign Disposer of all Things, is to be guilty of Ingratitude, and Impiety, at the same Time. To attribute them to mere human Wisdom, to the Councils and Designs of Men, to the Skill and Dexterity of those who had the Management of publick Affairs, is to rob God of his Honour, and to ascribe that Glory to Man which is due to Him only : For a little Attention will serve to shew us that he had the principal Hand in them ; that he directed their Councils, and conducted their Designs, and order'd and dispos'd Events in such a Manner, as to secure us in the Possession of these Blessings : And therefore, not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name be the Glory given.

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BUT Secondly: Another Disposition, or Affection, which this Consideration ought to excite in us, is a Zeal for the Honour of that Religion, and of those Laws, which the Providence of God has wonderfully preserv'd to us: Blessings which are sufficiently valuable in themselves, and render'd more so by the Manner in which they have been transmitted to us. And certainly we cannot discover a more commendable Zeal than that which is shewn in the Cause of God and our Country, in Behalf of the best Religion and the best Laws in the World. To be cold and indifferent toward them, is to be insensible of the Blessings we enjoy, and consequently is the most ungrateful Return we can make for them. If the Regard we pay to Things ought to be in Proportion to their real Worth and Excellence, these demand our warmest Zeal and Affection; the one, as it secures to us the most valuable of all Blessings upon Earth; the other, as it gives us the firmest Assurance
of

of the highest Felicity we are capable of in Heaven.

AND the best Way of expressing this Zeal, is by a constant Adherence to the Profession, and an uniform Obedience to the Duties of our Holy Religion, by an inviolable Attachment to the real Interests, and a strict Conformity to the Laws of our Country. For it signifies nothing to boast the Purity of the one, or the Excellence of the other, if we pay a Regard to neither in our Actions and Behaviour. If our Lives be unsuitable to our Profession, we might as well be Members of the worst, as of the best Church in the World; and an arbitrary Government would serve our Turn much better, if we are refractory and disobedient to the Laws we are under, if we abuse our Freedom, and use our Liberty as a Cloak of Licentiousness. If we would therefore preserve the Credit of our Religion, and support the Dignity of our Laws; if we

would render ourselves worthy of these inestimable Blessings, we should pay them a strict Observance, and shew, out of a good Conversation, the real Regard we have for them.

So far this Zeal is a Duty in common both to Magistrates and People : But then the Manner of expressing it is somewhat different. It is enough that the People express theirs by their Obedience to the Laws of God and Man ; the Magistrate is not only to do all this, but more ; he is to take Care that others do it likewise ; that is, he is to prevent, as much as in him lies, the Infringement of these Laws ; to make Use of that coercive Power which they have given him, to restrain the Licentiousness of the People, and to punish the Wrong-Doers, that others, being admonish'd by their Example, might be the more afraid to offend.

NOR

Nor is this all ; it is the Business of the Magistrate likewise to adjust Differences, and to decide all Matters of Controversy which shall arise among the People, and which fall within the Limits of his Power : And in determining these Disputes, he is to do nothing by Partiality, in preferring one to another ; nor to regard either Rich or Poor, in the Administration of Justice. *'Thou shalt not,* says the Law of Moses, *countenance a poor Man in his Cause :* His Poverty, how great soever, is no just Plea for shewing him any undue Favour : And therefore much less should the Wealth of any Man extort that from the Magistrate which he would deny to the Necessity of another. *'Be not faint-hearted,* says the Son of Sirach, *when thou sittest in Judgment ; and let not the Reverence of any Man cause thee to fall.* The Office of a Magistrate is of too sacred a Nature to be

(1) EXOD. xxiii. 3. (2) ECCLES. iv. 9. (3) ECCLES. iv. 22.

trifled with; and the Trust repos'd in him by his Country, is of such Importance, as requires the utmost Fidelity in the Discharge of it. Neither the Frowns of the Great, nor the Clamours of the Multitude, should deter him from his Duty, nor in the least incline him to give wrong Sentence, or accept the Person of the Ungodly. In a Word, nothing should either byass his Understanding, pervert his Will, or corrupt his Affections, so as to divert him from that chief Point, which should be always in his View, the ministring of true Judgment unto the People.

THESE, my Brethren, are, in few Words, the Duties of the Civil Magistrate, which I have set before You, not so much to instruct, as to exhort you to support with Dignity the Character you sustain, and to tread in the Steps of those who have gone before you. For there have not been wanting Magistrates in this City of the most undaunted Integrity, who have stood up
boldly

boldly in the Cause of Virtue, and have dar'd even to attack the Vices of the Great ; who have suppress'd, or at least corrected, the Excess of that pernicious Practice of GAMING, so ruinous to the Fortunes, and so destructive of the Peace and Happiness, not only of single Individuals, but of whole Families. Proceed then in so glorious a Cause, and copy these Examples which are laid before you. There are still *Excesses* enough to correct, and *Vices* to reform within this City.

GIVE me Leave only to mention One, nameli that excessive Fondness which the Youth of both Sexes have shewn for Theatrical Entertainments ; which, by giving them a Taste for Pleasures unsuitable to the Condition of Life they are in, may indispose them for Business, and unfit them for the Employments they are intended for. Would it not be adviseable therefore (if some Expedient could be found) to lay these Entertainments under proper Regulations ;

lations ; and to restrain them, in such a Manner, that they may contribute only to the Amusement of those who resort hither, and not be the Ruin of our own People? But this I shall leave to your Prudence and Discretion ; and shall conclude, with begging God that he would direct your Councils, and prosper your Undertakings to the publick Good ; that you may discharge this high Trust with Honour to yourselves, and Advantage to this City ; that you may receive the secret Approbation of your own Consciences ; and that your Conduct may be approv'd in the Sight of God and Men. *Which God, of his infinite Mercy, grant, &c.*



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